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was called to resist the “*vultus instantis tyranni.*” To such, if such there are, we bid God speed, for we fear that it is no ordinary trial which awaits them.

ART. III. — *The Life of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry.* By ALEXANDER SLIDELL MACKENZIE, U. S. N. New York : Harper & Brothers. 2 vols. 18mo. pp. 322 and 270.

WE have seen it asserted in the public prints, that an order has been issued by the Lords of the Admiralty to print in a cheap form, for distribution amongst the seamen of the Royal Navy, those time-honored sea songs of Dibdin and others, by which the heart of the mariner is stirred as with the sound of a trumpet. The wisdom of this measure can only be fully appreciated by those who have watched a group on board of a man-of-war, listening with open mouths to the sonorous voice of some favorite captain of the fore-castle or main-top, as he gives forth in a kind of chant (all sea tunes resemble each other) the fervid national song, whose spirit nerves the faintest heart, and makes the stoutest tremble with eagerness ; — the pet boys, or *chickens* as they are affectionately termed, nestled, each one under the wing of his guardian, the landsmen forming a respectful outline to the group, and some officers mounted on a convenient gun, or a topgallant fore-castle, partaking in the pleasure and excitement of the scene. This is a favorite amusement of a pleasant evening on board a vessel of war at sea, and no one will doubt that the guns of a ship will be better served whilst the effect of such a celebration of former victories still lingers in the hearts of those who have heard it.

What these songs of the sea are to the untutored tar, well-written biographies of distinguished naval men are to the educated officer. Such an one is that before us, and Mr. Mackenzie has rendered an essential benefit to the navy and country, by holding up to her young aspirants the example of one of the nation's most gallant sons, stimulating them by the most powerful of all influences to the high duties of patriotism, valor, and self-devotion. Mr. Mackenzie has enhanced

the merit of his service by the fidelity and elegance of its execution.

This tribute to the memory of a man who did the profession so much honor, comes very appropriately from one of its distinguished members. The task of writing the life of Commodore Perry is attended with some painful difficulties. Mr. Mackenzie has met them in the true spirit of his calling, — bravely, and honorably. It is sufficient praise to say of the literary merit of the work, that it comports well with the dignity of the subject, and answers the high expectation raised by the skill and success with which Mr. Mackenzie has frequently exercised his pen on subjects of naval and general interest.

In contemplating the entire life and character of Commodore Perry, we are struck with its harmonious consistency and completeness. It is a tale well told. His early pursuits, studies, and amusements were suited to qualify him for his future profession, for which he was led by the example of his father, a distinguished naval character in the war of the Revolution, and subsequently in the French disturbances, — to entertain a youthful predilection. He received his warrant as a midshipman at the age of fourteen, and commenced his career of duty under the command of his father, who thus enjoys the double honor of giving such a son to his country, and of training him in the path of his future usefulness, to be a worthy stamp and representative of his own merit. Young Perry passed through the various grades, up to the period of his command on Lake Erie, with great credit, creating in the minds of all who were associated with him the exalted expectations, which were so fully realized, and even surpassed, on that field of true glory. He died of a terrible malady, under the most painful circumstances, away from his family and the comforts of home, lying in that “worst of all dungeons, the truck-cabin of a schooner,” lonely, cheerless, doubly cheerless for the thought of the absent wife, the object of his first and only passion, hitherto happy, now to be heart-broken. Full of moral beauty as was the scene, how different from the death of the warrior, amid the high and thrilling excitements of battle, the “*gaudia certaminis*,” when the tension of the mind deadens the body to the sense of pain, was the doom of our hero in the deathlike, panting stillness of that stagnant climate, subdued by

enervating disease. But his spirit was equal to the occasion. In the language of his physician, "during his whole illness he showed every characteristic that could be exhibited by a great man, and a Christian." We trust his dying hour was cheered by the thought of the tears and love which attend his memory. We cannot do our readers a greater favor than to transfer to our pages his biographer's eloquent and discriminating sketch of his character.

"The scenes through which we have carried him render it unnecessary to say, that Perry united immovable firmness to the highest and most chivalrous courage, and a calmness and self-possession that never forsook him. Danger, instead of disturbing the ordinary exercise of his faculties, seemed but to stimulate and develope them. Prompt to decide, immovable in his decisions, energetic in carrying them into effect,—to these valuable qualities he added an untiring industry and enterprise, which rose at the prospect of labor and difficulty. He did not rush impetuously at an undertaking, and afterwards falter and become discouraged at the prospect of unexpected obstacles, but, commencing with calm earnestness, never paused short of complete fulfilment. He had the rare faculty of seeing things as they were, undisturbed by the mist of feeling, hopes, or prejudices. His mind was strong, and well poised; not imaginative, perhaps, or fanciful, but characterized by sound sense, enlightening an unbiassed judgment which was rarely at fault. To this was added a correct taste, regulating his words and actions, and rendering them consistent and becoming.

"A mind thus naturally vigorous and discriminating, had been much enriched by extensive reading among choice and well selected books, particularly in ancient history, and the biography of the illustrious dead. For amusement he turned with greatest pleasure to the older dramatists, and Shakspeare was his fast favorite. He was not only thoroughly familiar with the text of this author, which he studied with school-boy earnestness, but had read all the most approved commentaries; he had, moreover, opinions of his own with regard to the various prominent characters of these dramas, which he is said, by one who knew him intimately, to have discussed in a masterly manner, unfolding their beauties with rare discrimination and taste. He had, indeed, on all subjects, a happy faculty of using and imparting the information he had obtained; and his judicious remarks were always enhanced by the absence of pedantry and pretension, and by his pervading modesty. He also wrote with facility and correctness. His extreme aversion to the use of the pen probably led him to that conciseness and force which is con-

spicuous in his letters. He never dwelt over any composition, and not more than two draughts of important letters in his own hand are to be found among his papers. He had not the common affectation of the great, and often the little great, of writing unintelligibly. His handwriting, like his style, was rapid, easy, and elegant ; a picture in some sort, of the fairness and simplicity of his character.

“ Envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness found no resting-place in the heart of Perry. There was no room there for any but the noblest feelings and affections. He was not disturbed by petty irritability on trifling occasions, though his temper was violent, and easily roused by injustice towards others and himself. It was his pride down to a certain period of his life, that he had his temper under perfect control, until a personal insult, from which his guarded and dignified manners had ever before protected him, by producing a fit of ungovernable passion, convinced him that his command of himself was less perfect than he had supposed. The active benevolence and overflowing humanity of Perry exhibited itself as often as sickness, misfortune, or misery presented itself for his commiseration. A few anecdotes of this striking characteristic of him have been recorded ; of how many must he have carried his knowledge with him to the grave ? For, in acts like these, and in his efforts in behalf of his friends, it was eminently his custom to do good by stealth.

“ Perry was discriminating in the choice of his friends, and warm and constant in his attachment to them ; never permitting an opportunity to pass unimproved to do them kindness, or to advance their interest. He possessed eminently the faculty of creating strong affection for his person in those who were intimate with him. With regard to those who were accidentally associated with him, and for whom he had no previous or particular regard, he was rather disposed to discover their good qualities than to be censorious of their faults. He was unsuspecting in his temper, and gives himself the character of being credulous ; the fault of a noble mind, conscious of no evil itself, and suspecting none in others. His magnanimity was conspicuous, and betrayed him into some indiscretions. He had a chivalrous sense of the courtesy that is due to woman, and the most enthusiastic admiration of the female character. He was remarkable for his aversion for all grovelling, vulgar, and sensual propensities, amounting to positive detestation.

“ As a naval commander he was sensitively alive to the appearance, order, and efficiency of his vessel ; every thing connected with the management of the sails, and a skilful performance of every duty connected with the fighting department, received his zealous and unwearied attention. As an officer,

and as a seaman, he was equally eminent. He had a thorough sympathy with all under his command, attended personally to the comfort of his crew, to solace the sick, preserve the health of those who were well, and watch, in every way, over the welfare of all. He was a strict disciplinarian ; but always punished with reluctance, and only when unavoidable. With the officers, his extraordinary faculty of creating a lively attachment to his person spared him the necessity of frequent censure ; a disapproving glance of his eye had often more effect than the stern rebuke of others. The unwillingness of his officers to offend him was extreme. Among his correspondence there are many evidences of this peculiarity, in letters written after the commission of some trifling fault, evincing not so much an apprehension of his official disapprobation, as the loss of his favorable opinion and esteem. Every germ of merit was sure to be discovered by him, and encouraged, and no opportunity was ever lost of advancing those who performed their duty with cheerfulness and fidelity. His attention to the moral and intellectual training of his midshipmen was unceasing. No want of encouragement from the subjects of his solicitude, no reluctance to learn, no resistance to being taught, turned him back from the determined prosecution of this all-important, but much neglected duty."

* * * * *

" The person of Perry was of the loftiest stature and most graceful mould. He was easy, and measured in his movements, and calm in his air. His brow was full, massive, and lofty ; his features regular and elegant, and his eye full, dark, and lustrous. His mouth was uncommonly handsome, and his teeth large, regular, and very white. The prevailing expression of his countenance was mild, benignant, and cheerful, and a smile of amiability, irresistibly pleasing, played about his lips. His whole air was expressive of health, freshness, comfort, and contentment, bearing testimony to a life of temperance and moderation.

" In his private character Perry was a model of every domestic virtue and grace ; an affectionate and devoted husband, a fond father, and a faithful and generous friend ; most happy in the domestic and social relations he had formed for himself, and the centre and cause of happiness to those who surrounded him. Thoroughly domestic in his tastes, yet social in his feelings, hospitable without ostentation, and not averse to a measured and regular conviviality in the midst of his family and friends, eminently urbane and modest in demeanor, yet ever willing, as able, to take his fair share in the general entertainment.

" The amiability of Perry was one of his most distinguishing traits, and the susceptibility of his feelings was excessive. Such are some of the attributes of the character of Perry. A brief

anecdote will show with what sentiments he impressed one of the noblest of Americans. When Decatur was first informed by Mr. Handy of the particulars of the death of Perry, he was sensibly affected ; after a short pause, he remarked, with great solemnity, ' Sir ! the American navy has lost its brightest ornament.' " — Vol. II. pp. 237 – 244.

We cannot but express our regret that Lieutenant Mackenzie has dwelt at such length upon the angry discussion between Commodore Perry and Commodore Chauncey, concerning the manning of the fleet on Lake Erie. His object is to show the difficulties with which the former had to contend, and his energy in overcoming them ; but we fear that in doing so he implies some censure of the latter. This we do not believe it was his intention to express. We should be sorry to see any thing detracted from the perfect honor of a venerable name, around which are gathered some of the warmest sympathies and kindest associations of the navy.

Mr. Mackenzie is entitled to the particular thanks of the navy, for having supplied a faithful and true account of the battle of Lake Erie. We have, in a previous Number,* examined critically Mr. Cooper's account of this action in his " Naval History," and given in some detail our reasons for rejecting it as utterly false in spirit, statement, and comment. We shall not renew or extend that criticism here beyond a passing remark. Deliberate and repeated examination and reflection, assisted and directed by an intimate acquaintance with some of the most distinguished of Perry's officers, (amongst others the gallant and deeply lamented Commodore Thomas Holdup Stevens, whose old associates mourn his recent untimely death,) lead us now to confirm the opinion we have already expressed. And we heartily congratulate the navy, that it has now in its possession a work to which it can turn for a fair record of the events of the memorable 10th of September ; a record, just to the living and the dead, which places Perry where he should be, on the pinnacle of the fame won on that glorious day, and awards to the second in command a severe but just condemnation. Mr. Mackenzie, as was his duty, has entered into a full examination of the difficulties between Commodores Perry and Elliott, which we recommend to the particular and careful perusal of every young officer. He will not only learn to avoid the misconduct of the

* See *North American Review*, Vol. XLIX. pp. 438 *et seq.*

latter,—an unimportant consideration, for, we believe, no such example is necessary in our navy to stimulate commanders to the duty of following their flag into action,—but he will be taught, by the unhappy consequences resulting to the former, never to suffer private feelings to control a sense of obligation to the country and the service. Perry, in his generous sentiment, that “there is honor enough for us all,” forgot that he had no right to make others share in the dishonor of an individual. His neglect to arrest Captain Elliott, on the day of the battle, was the great error of his life, and he had sufficient cause to repent it. No compromise with guilt, whatever the motive that leads to it, can be safe. We are bound to repeat here, our more than contempt, our indignant scorn of the assertion of Mr. Cooper, in a note to his relation of the battle of Lake Erie, that Captain Elliott, when he went to bring up the gunboats, encountered as much danger as Commodore Perry did in passing in an open boat from the *Lawrence* to the *Niagara*. This statement, speciously untrue, might be taken on the authority of Mr. Cooper, by careless readers. Let it, however, be simply understood, that Commodore Perry was in an open boat in the hottest of the fire, and that Captain Elliott entered that same boat to go still further from the scene of action, at a moment when the head of his ship, hitherto motionless, and at a safe distance, was pointed towards the enemy.

We recur, however, to a pleasanter theme, the great value of this faithful record of Commodore Perry's life to the young officer, to whom, if he hope to rise to similar honor in his profession, it should be a text-book and a guide; to the old officer, who will find, in its pages, the scenes and recollections of his early life renewed; and to every American reader, whose heart must glow with delight to find that he had such a countryman as Perry, and that such scenes, as the battle of Lake Erie, were acted in his native land.

If, however, we take pride in recounting the past deeds of our little navy, and contemplating the character of the gallant commanders who led on to their achievement, that feeling receives a severe check when we consider its present condition. A long interval of peace has laid to sleep the vigilance of the government, and, as we are forced to conclude, has broken in seriously upon the subordination of the naval service. We believe that the moral condition of the navy is perfectly sound, that the patriotism and devotion of the officers is by no means

lessened, that the spirit of the last war is still in vigorous life. But the columns of the daily journals, for the last five or six years, have contained many disgraceful exposures, whilst the general demand for reorganization indicates its necessity. The improvement and confirmation of the discipline of the corps by a new code of regulations adapted to its advanced condition ; a reorganization which would include a " Retired List " ; the timely promotion of the junior officers ; the regular and successive employment of officers of all grades, so that each one might perform his fair share of sea-duty ; together with minor changes in the mode of enlistment, and treatment of seamen, are subjects on which we have before expressed some opinions, and to which we may hereafter recur. We make it our particular object at present to urge upon the public attention, and especially to enforce upon the minds of those who have charge of the national welfare, the insufficiency of the present naval force to the honor and protection of the country.

We are not aware that any statistical statement which we could present would make this insufficiency apparent. It argues nothing to say that we have eleven ships of the line, (but one, by the way, ready for service, and that one abroad,) seventeen frigates of all classes, and twenty-one sloops of war ; and that of these but one ship of the line, five frigates, and fourteen sloops are in commission, and actually fitted for a cruise. It may not be unprofitable, however, to compare the amount of tonnage engaged in the foreign trade of England, France, and the United States, and the degree of protection which each country can afford to her commercial marine in the event of a sudden call. It appears from the Parliamentary Report of 1836 that there are 27,895 British vessels employed in the foreign trade, the tonnage of which, taken at an average of 120 tons for each vessel, amounts to 3,347,400 tons, employing 181,642 seamen. The navy of Great Britain consists of 565 vessels, including steamers, brigs, and packets, of which 130 are ships of the line, and about 190 of all classes were in actual service before the breaking out of the China war and the disturbances in the East, by which of course the number is very much increased. The foreign tonnage of France is estimated at 647,000 tons, comprising, at the same average, 5,391 vessels navigated by 35,000 seamen. The navy of France contains 350 vessels, of which 110 are ships of the line, and being almost entirely built since the year 1816,

its condition is very perfect. The foreign tonnage of the United States may be stated at 2,000,000, the number of vessels it employs is between 16 and 17,000, and the number of registered seamen 108,000 to 110,000. The navy comprises 68 vessels, including brigs and schooners, 11 of them ships of the line, and 3 of them large steamers of war; of the whole number 36 are in commission, and 33 in active service. We will put the above statement in a tabular form, to make the comparatively very small amount of protection provided for the American commerce, more apparent.

	Foreign Tonnage.	No. of Merchant vessels.	No. of Seamen.	Vessels of war of all descriptions.
England	3,347,400	27,895	181,642	565
France	647,000	5,391	35,000	350
U. States	2,000,000	16,666	108,000	68

Besides the above figures, not inexpressive in themselves, it is to be noted that the navies of England and France are in a more complete condition than ever before; their dock-yards, machinery, and all conveniences for fitting out ships are wonderfully improved and multiplied; their naval gunnery is perfected by incessant practice in schools whose pupils are distributed among the vessels in commission; their models, particularly the English, are bettered; their ships are in finished order; and, in short, a naval rivalry has sprung up between the two nations, which has brought out the genius of both to the greatest advantage, and led to the highest perfection of naval economy the world has ever witnessed.

We do not forget, that England and France, on account of their propinquity and mutual mistrust, and also as the two most distinguished members of the European family of nations, maintain a naval force competent to preserve the balance of power in Europe, and arrest a sudden invasion, as well as to secure their foreign commerce. With the politics of Europe we have happily no concern. But, if the above figures should fail to prove any thing, the constant call from our merchants abroad for more cruisers, might show the necessity for increased naval protection. Instances not unfrequently occur, of difficulties which threaten collision, with a painful disparity of force on our side, and these difficulties would often be prevented by the presence of a respectable

squadron. We have very lately had occasion to wonder at the supine neglect of our trade in the East. For more than a year, no American man-of-war has been seen in that quarter ; and the squadron, which, after numerous delays, arising from petty obstacles, has been at last sent out, is, when compared with our resources, the property at stake, and the dignity of the nation, utterly contemptible. During the late blockade of the French in the Rio de la Plata, Lieutenant Mackenzie, whose late biographical work we have been treating, was called upon, whilst in command of the brig *Dolphin*, of ten guns, to assert and maintain the rights and honor of the flag, against the French Admiral, *Le Blanc*, commanding a fleet of twenty or more sail, — his flag-ship, a *razée* of sixty guns. The Captain of a French brig of war had been guilty of the outrage of firing repeatedly into the American bark *Madonna*, as she was sailing out of the port of Montevideo, before and in which a part of the French squadron was lying. The pretext for this violence was a frivolous one. An apology had already been made to the American Consul, when Mr. Mackenzie arrived in Montevideo, a day or two after the occurrence. Not satisfied with this concession, and feeling himself called upon, as the representative of the Navy, to notice the insult, he addressed a letter to the French Admiral. *M. Le Blanc*, in an evasive reply, noticed the humble rank and command of his correspondent ; to which Mr. Mackenzie replied, with a happy mixture of modesty and spirit, that whilst he acknowledged the high rank of the Admiral, and yielded with becoming deference and respect to his superior age and station, yet the accident, which left him, for the time, the sole naval commander in the River, invested him with the dignity of the naval representative of his country, and thus placed him upon an equality with the commander-in-chief, whom he had the honor of addressing. This correspondence, into which was introduced a question of grave import, terminated in satisfactory explanations on the part of the Admiral, and in his sending the commander, who had committed the offence, under arrest, and without his sword, to make a personal apology to the American Consul. Fortunately for the honor of the flag, the spirit of the commander of the *Dolphin* was not regulated by the size of the vessel under his command.

In 1834, the flag of the Pacific squadron was hoisted on

board a sloop of war, and her command given to a distinguished commodore, by Mr. Woodbury, the strictly economical Secretary of the Navy. In 1835, this officer found himself in the River Guayaquil, engaged with the chief of a revolutionary party in arms against the government of the Equator, in an angry correspondence concerning some aggressions upon American citizens and property. The headquarters of this party was the frigate *Columbia*, built by the late Mr. Eckford, for the Colombian Government. She was a ship of sixty guns, thirty-two pounders, manned by seven hundred men. The American sloop mounted twenty-four guns, twenty-four pounders, and had a crew of one hundred and seventy-five men. So great was the probability of an engagement, that the Commodore cast loose his guns, prepared his ship for action, and kept her in this state during one night. The action would have taken place in smooth water, at anchor, where superior seamanship could be of little avail. Notwithstanding the established valor of American seamen, and the low character of the *Columbia's* crew, which consisted principally of raw military recruits, taken from the lowest class of a degraded population, the great disparity must have rendered the result uncertain, — the more so, as there were a few, about two hundred, of Bolivar's veteran troops on board. We will venture, however, to indorse the opinion of the gallant Commodore, founded upon a careful examination of the resources and condition of the *Columbia*, that if he had failed himself to make her haul down her flag, "a gig might have picked her up when we had done with her." It would not be difficult to collect other instances, equally instructive, of the importance of increasing our naval force upon the several stations.

But, the argument for a large naval force, to guard against invasion, applies nearly as well to this country as to England. England is our near neighbour, by means of her American possessions. The use of steam, in the navigation of the ocean, brings us into propinquity and intimate relationship with the old world. Being, with regard to Europe, in a political view, an insular power, naval superiority removes from our happy borders the horrors of war. Recent events have supplied this argument with an apt and painful illustration. During the last two years, discussions of a serious nature have taken place between England and this country, assuming the

tones of angry menace or peaceful negotiation, as the passions of individuals, or the prudence of councils, have prevailed. To these latent causes of disagreement, has been added fresh excitement in the arrest of Mr. McLeod, and the intemperate report of Mr. Pickens. The latter, insulting in its language, loose in its statements, and looser in its composition, is, as a state paper, beneath criticism. It served, however, its purpose of aggravation. It also presented us to the world in a light at once ludicrous and humiliating, — making us assume the tone and attitude of defiance towards a nation, preëminently the greatest in the world, in naval power, with our coast and harbours unguarded and unfortified, and our rich commerce scattered over every sea, without protection; for, what would our paltry squadrons avail against the fleets of Great Britain, except to evince the courage and unflinching sense of duty of a few devoted officers and seamen? Had Mr. McLeod been condemned and executed, before English blood had had time to cool from the first excitement of his arrest, it is by no means improbable, that a declaration of war would have immediately followed. Ministers might not have been able to resist the angry feeling of the people. And the first announcement of war might well have been from the guns of English ships of the line, and steamers of war, in our defenceless harbours. This danger, which, though less imminent than it has been, some sudden *contretemps* still might realize, ought to arouse us to a sense of the imperious necessity for preparation, — not as regards this event alone, but a preparation which will enable us, at all times, to meet with calmness any of those unexpected exigencies, to which nations, like individuals, are subject. The state of the defences of our principal commercial ports, is, under the present circumstances, a fit subject of serious apprehension. A sudden declaration of war would find us so miserably unprovided, that our rich cities might be laid under contribution. When the news of the arrest of McLeod reached England, the propriety of sending ten sail of the line upon our coast, to enforce the claim for his release, was advocated in the London journals. Having nothing to oppose to this force, we must have submitted to being bullied at our very threshold.

There is, however, another point of attack, which, in case of a war with Great Britain, is, to our view, worthy of the gravest consideration. If some leading journals are any au-

thority in the case, it would be the policy of Great Britain to throw her black regiments from Jamaica into the Southern country, and to proclaim freedom to the slaves. These troops, long since organized and disciplined, have lately been increased in number. Such a design, giving to the war, in the minds of the British people, the sacred character of a crusade against slavery, would go far to render the war universally popular. The abolition of slavery is, just now, the darling object of the nation; it is the diagnostic of one of those "periodical fits of morality," as Macauley terms them, to which the English people are subject. It is the chosen mode of appeasing the national conscience, for having originated the very evil, which they are now prepared to root out with the sword. Following up her uncompromising hostility, long ago declared to the slave trade, the active cruisers of England are fast sweeping, from the face of the ocean, every trace of this accursed traffic. She has also taken the lead in the abolition of slavery itself, and probably there is no subject, except danger to the national integrity, upon which the whole British people could be brought to concur with so much unanimity. The existence of slavery in the West India colonies, prevented the entertainment of such a project during the last war. This impediment being now removed, the emancipated negroes, inspired with the desire of making their brethren in this country sharers in their lately recovered freedom, would supply the means of its execution. They would form a nucleus and military centre for the slaves, and give to insurrection, organization and support. It is dreadful to contemplate such an event, both in its immediate and future consequences. But they, who in other times have been so little scrupulous about hunting our frontier people with Indians, cannot be relied upon to be dainty as to the use of this other means of offence. And there is no more obvious resort for protection against it, than an efficient force of sailing ships and steamers, to guard the whole line of the Southern frontier. Let the Southern members of Congress look to this in time;—let them weigh the urgent necessity of a home squadron, which, on the least alarm, may hasten to their relief. England is covering the Atlantic with her gigantic steamers, which, when wanted, are called into the public service. Ten new steamers of war are ordered to be laid down, an important addition to her immense fleet. And whilst we are inviting her to engage in

hostilities, what have we to oppose to this preparation on her part? If we are a proud and high-spirited people, we can the less brook the humiliation, which surely awaits us at the commencement of any struggle with England or France, unless we gird on our armour in time. Doubtless we have a naval and military fame, to be justly proud of; but the battle, if it come, will not be decided by past achievements. Far from it. Our successes having inspired our enemies with higher respect and greater caution, have imposed on us the duty and necessity of making greater efforts.

It may be suggested that this confession of weakness is impolitic; that by exposing our vulnerable points, we at the same time invite an attack, and supply the means of its direction. Our fear on the contrary is, that what we have been saying has of late been better understood in Downing Street, than at Washington; and certain we are, that it is only by a bold avowal to ourselves of our actual condition of weakness, that we shall learn how to manage our prudence and courage in repairing the evils of past neglect, and providing against their recurrence. It is by exposing our defects, that we hope to wake up the public mind to a due sense of the necessity for immediate exertion.

In particular, our steamers of war should be multiplied without delay, to provide for the defence of our shores and harbours. We must be prepared to meet our commercial rivals in this new mode of warfare. The application of steam to naval war is the greatest military invention of the day. It is further recommended to us by being our own. The steam frigate *Fulton*, built at the close of the last war, is, as far as we know, the first of that class of vessels. She, it will be recollected, was blown up by accident in 1829. We have now three large steam frigates, equal probably to any in the world for harbour defence. The number of these should not only be increased, but smaller steamers should be added, fitted to cruise in the shoaler waters of the southern coast, and adapted to answer sudden calls, and undertake desperate enterprises. The employment of the large steamers is attended with great expense, and their loss would be severely felt. The small armed steam vessels would be most advantageously employed in the revenue service, taking the place of the present cutters. We have heard the opinion expressed by intelligent merchants, that their utility in saving property

would be incalculable. If this branch of the public service were merged in the navy, these steamers would become proper men-of-war to be used as occasion might require. We can see no advantage in keeping the revenue duty distinct, provided it be properly organized. Our ships of the line, now decaying on the stocks, should be put in commission as a part of the public defence, and to qualify the superior officers for the conduct of fleets. And our smaller cruisers should be found in every quarter of the world, protecting our commerce, and exhibiting that readiness for hostilities which is the best security for the continuance of peace. The aphorism of Sir Walter Raleigh, "Whosoever commands the sea, commands the trade; whosoever commands the trade, commands the riches of the world," can never be safely neglected in the councils of a people who rank the second among the nations in commercial wealth.

Indeed, whatever considerations, founded upon extensive commerce, insulated position, national emulation, or the genius of the people, can be urged for the creation and maintenance of a naval force in any country, may be transferred with truth and wisdom to this. It is not too much to say that an ample naval armament is indispensable not only to the opulence and prosperity, but to the honor and even to the independence, of the United States. In free States, military, like civil, institutions, to rest upon a solid foundation, must be popular. They cannot exist permanently, unless the enlightened minds which sooner or later lead the general opinion, recognise their advantage and necessity. It needs hardly be said now, that this vital moral support upholds the American Navy with its full force. The necessity of a navy was admitted as a principle of the founders of the nation; and subsequent events have amply illustrated the wisdom of their decision. History has also taught this truth, that a navy is the only standing military establishment which is perfectly consistent with the safety of free institutions. "*La force navale est la seule, qui jamais ne peut mettre en danger les libertés du peuple.*"

We will profit by this opportunity to offer our opinion upon one or two subjects which seem to us of sufficient importance to require the earliest attention of the Department, and of Congress. The first of these relates to a Home squadron. It is a strange and startling fact, that not since

the year 1810 has there been found at any time, in any of our harbours, a man-of-war of any class, commissioned, and *thoroughly* equipped for service, unless she were bound to, or had just returned from, a foreign station, — except during the short period when an attempt was made to keep up a small squadron on the coast under Commodore Nicholson, and whilst that miscalled man-of-war, the Schooner *Experiment*, was performing her trial cruises from port to port, afraid to venture out into the open sea. When, in 1838, it was reported in Philadelphia that the packet ship *Susquehanna* had been captured by a pirate off the Capes of Delaware, the only vessel that could be found to send immediately to her rescue was a revenue cutter of four guns. The country will not have forgotten the sensation created by this alarm, the deep distress that filled the public mind, the agonized apprehension of friends, the fearful sympathy of all. It is true that this solemn warning produced a slight effort, but it failed to lead to any permanent protection. What renders this state of things more ridiculous, is the fact, that at this very moment our ships are rotting useless upon the stocks at our navy yards. One ship of the line at the Charlestown yard, the *Vermont*, has been twenty-five years under cover ; another, the *Virginia*, twenty. Ten years may have elapsed since any foot but that of a curious visitor has trodden their decks. But we must qualify this remark, for even in their present state they not unfrequently require repairs, the expense of which would take so much from that of their equipment.

A fleet of several sail of the line, always ready for active service, accompanied by a sufficient number of smaller vessels ever on the wing, and keeping constant watch over the whole line of coast from one extremity to the other, would supply to the navy that school of practice which is a grand desideratum, a school of practice not only for the inferior, but also for the superior officers. We consider it particularly desirable for the latter class, who will otherwise be called upon to exercise the command of fleets without the previous experience indispensable to their skilful management. Such a fleet, meanwhile, would afford a degree of security against the danger of invasion, and the mortification and loss of future blockades. We will suggest that to render this protection effectual, some small steamers might be added to the fleet, to navigate along the shoal borders of the Southern States, where

our heavier ships cannot venture. It is so clearly the interest and duty of the South to provide this protection, that we cannot but repeat the expression of our surprise at its attracting so little of the attention of her statesmen.

We believe also that it would be for the interest of our commerce, if the number of small vessels were increased. To be satisfied of the efficiency and great utility of these vessels, we have only to look to the English and French marines. Every officer, who has been employed abroad for the last ten years, has had occasion to admire the beauty, active qualities, and comfortable internal economy of the French brigs. The British Admiralty are daily adding to this class of vessels, supplying the places of the old ten gun brigs (the wash tub), with new and beautiful models of Sir William Symond's construction. They suffice on ordinary occasions for the protection of merchantmen; are maintained in active service at a comparatively small cost; and the onerous duty which their command involves, falls very properly upon younger officers.

A Retired List is another subject which presents itself to our minds. There are already officers who have virtually retired, being no longer employed by the department, and for whom any active professional occupation seems to be out of the question; and we grieve to say that there are undoubtedly some unworthy of promotion, and utterly unfitted by bad habits and lost reputation for places of trust. The latter stand in the way of better men, impeding their advancement. It is well understood that the position of five or six worthless names near the head of the list of lieutenants, known to the Department to be entirely undeserving of a commander's commission, prevented the promotions that would otherwise have taken place at the close of the last session of Congress. The President did not feel authorized to pass over their names, no distinct charges against them being filed at the Department. We have authority for saying, that Mr. Van Buren assigned this as a reason for making no nominations from the grade of lieutenants, on his retiring from the Presidential chair. A Retired List would also become an appropriate refuge for such as are inclined by ill health, private circumstances, or professional disqualification (not discreditable) to seek an escape from the occupation and exposures of a sea life. The question how officers are to be placed

upon a Retired List against their will, is a serious and difficult one. We will not discuss it at present. But it is a notorious fact, as we have before asserted, that the Department have exercised an equivalent power in refusing to employ officers who have fallen under their displeasure. Instances of this must occur to every one acquainted with the details of the Navy.

The measure, however, which will result in the highest benefit to the organic improvement and discipline of the navy, and most effectually reanimate its drooping spirit, is the creation of the grade of Admirals. This measure is demanded alike by policy and justice, whilst the objections urged against it are answered with facility. For the want of this grade the navy has suffered, and will continue to suffer, from a deficiency of proper subordination in the higher ranks, where the influence of bad example is eminently pernicious. When the present division of grades was adopted, our little navy required no higher rank. But we have come now to take a stand among naval powers, and have obtained a naval distinction which is a pledge both to the world and ourselves, of future prowess. We must hereafter equip fleets. It is our sure destiny, if we continue a united nation, to become a great naval power. We must provide for the proper conduct of these fleets. The necessary knowledge cannot be acquired in the course of any service at present within the reach of the superior officers, the utmost extent of which is the command of small squadrons consisting of two or three vessels. Fleet Tactics is of itself a separate study ; and one which can only be thoroughly pursued in actual practice upon the ocean.

The creation of Admirals is essential to the wholesome subordination and discipline of the service. A marked distinction of ranks is an elementary principle of the military system. Authority and high station are, by the very nature of things (if we may use the phrase), indissolubly united. We find the argument in the constitution of society, in the constitution of our own minds. It is equally applicable to all stations. Captains require, not less than midshipmen, that the officer who commands them should be their superior. This superiority must be intrinsic. It must be the property and quality of the officer, and not an occasional and temporary investment. This seems to be a superfluous announce-

ment, yet the truth is lost sight of by those who oppose the introduction of the highest grade into our naval establishment. At present, the brevet rank of Commodore is made to supply the deficiency. This officer takes up his ephemeral dignity when he hoists his flag, and lays it down on the termination of the cruise, returning to an equality with those over whom, for a series of years, he has exercised his high command. He possesses none of the legitimate protection, the irresponsibility to inferiors, which real, and not nominal, rank alone can give.

One of the evil consequences, resulting from this state of things, is, that frequently our flag-ships are not properly officered, because the Commodore must, if he take a Captain to his ship, receive an equal. We are aware, that the lines of duty and authority are marked out by the Department. But, whoever is versed in military affairs, and reflects upon the absolute necessity for distinct subordination in them, will understand, that this is not a sufficient remedy for an inherent evil. A fresh instruction from the Honorable Secretary of the Navy, will not create an occasional and detached *sentiment* of obedience. His *fiat*, powerful as it may be, cannot originate a new principle of military subordination, or violate an old one with impunity. There are various moral influences connected with the intercourse of Commodores and Captains, which we cannot hope to make intelligible to general readers. If the Commodore be asked, whether he intends to take a fighting-Captain (as the immediate commander of a flag-ship is styled), he may reply, "that he prefers to command his own ship." It would seem, then, that with a Captain of his own virtual grade, — and such only are qualified to command a frigate, or ship of the line, — it is a matter of doubt, whether he can command the ship he sails in, though there is no doubt, that he commands every other ship in the squadron. Yet it is equally his duty to command one ship as another, and one no more than another. He might as well insist upon being the first Lieutenant of the flag-ship.

But this reply betrays another evil. The Commodore is wanting in the feeling belonging to his temporary rank. He is as much in heart and mind a Captain, and nothing more, as when he wore his pendant on a ten-gun brig. He is deficient in the enlarged views, the comprehensive regard for the general good discipline of the service, and the high sense of au-

thority and responsibility, inspired by exalted rank. How should it be otherwise? He is what his education has made him; and it has been a part, and a most important part, of his military education, to know, and, if he be touched with honorable ambition, to feel, that he never can rise beyond the rank of Captain; that the highest rank of his profession is denied him; that he cannot even hope to escape personal responsibility to his Lieutenants, who, if he lives, must eventually become his equals.

The personal intercourse between a Commodore and the Captains of his squadron, is modified in an unhealthy manner, by these same influences. It wants the cordiality and freedom of equality; neither does it possess the becoming and easy dignity, on the one hand, and the ready and complying respect on the other, which express the natural and harmonious relation between distinct ranks. It would be an endless and very difficult task, to enumerate the various occasions of collisions and misconstruction, springing from this cause, as it is a painful one to dwell upon their serious and lasting detriment to the subordination of the Navy. People of all professions and stations may learn, from their own experiences, how indispensable it is, in filling up the daily detail of duty, that each one's place, degree, and authority, should be perfectly defined. This is eminently the case in military rule, where peremptory command and implicit obedience must go together. Rank, it is further to be considered, endows the possessor with adventitious qualities and merit. Not that we mean to say, that

“A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn.”

But a higher rank is a higher form of the invisible and irresistible power of the law. It addresses the sentiment of duty in a more solemn and impressive manner, sustains weakness, and represses rebellious encroachment. Rank, and its insignia, are the aids to legitimate authority, which, in all nations and all times, have been adopted by the common consent of mankind. This consent is conclusive evidence of their utility. No class of men is so perfect as to dispense safely with their help; otherwise, let us drop them altogether. They create respect, and this respect has its meaning and use. It is, in truth, the involuntary acknowledgment in the breast of him who feels it, of the right to order, and the obligation to obey.

We make bold to assert, that the superior officers *require the stimulus*, as they deserve the reward, of a higher object for their aspiration. Promotion is the very breath of military ambition ; the great and constant incentive to exertion, the beginning of youthful ardor, and the end of venerable renown. It is the theme of daily discourse among military men, the active and undying hope. The stimulus is not less essential to Captains, than to other officers. No effort, or but a feeble one, can be expected of a man, who believes that he has arrived at the highest distinction within his reach. Such a belief must be paralyzing to the best impulses of his nature. Moreover, a moral effect, which belongs to preferment while it is still before the eyes of the aspirant, is to keep up a livelier sense of duty and accountability, by presenting a continually rising aim for the thoughts to fix upon. We cannot but think, that if all prospect of the creation of this new grade were taken away, the consequences would be hurtful to the spirit of the Navy. But a hope, a cheerful hope, that justice would at length be done them, has animated the older officers to continued exertions. Their services, some of them most brilliant, are entitled to this reward. They expect, that the country will place them on the same footing with officers of their age, and term of service, in the navies of other countries.

But we will not dwell upon an argument, though sound, which wears an appearance of selfishness on the part of those who most feel its force. We will observe, that we have heard, with unmingled disgust, the proposition to select the Admirals from the list of Captains, passing over those who have worn out their lives in the Navy, and are unfitted, by age and infirmity, for active duties. We trust, that no man, or set of men, will dare seriously to meditate such an act of ingratitude and injustice. The veterans have done their work ; let them receive the reward. They are eminently calculated, by their age and experience, for those stations, which will bring them near the counsels of the Department. Let no such foul reproach, as this would bring upon us, stain the annals of the Navy. Let us, on the contrary, cherish the gratification of witnessing the dignified and honored retirement of these venerable public servants, who have escaped the blight of climate, “ the battle-fire and the wreck.”

We desire to see the creation of at least twenty-five Ad-

mirals, Vice-Admirals, and Rear-Admirals ; enough to command the principal foreign squadrons, and to preside over the naval bureaux at Washington, and over the larger and more active yards and home stations. It has been objected, that we have no appropriate commands for Admirals, assuming that fleets alone authorize their employment ; and further, that, if they were introduced into the Navy, the Department would be limited to their list in the choice of Commanders for foreign stations, whereas they may now select from among all the Captains, without giving rise to a discontent, which, it is supposed, would grow out of the neglect of a superior grade. In cases, to which our own naval experience does not extend, we may be permitted to appeal to the practice of other navies. In matters of form, we are necessarily, in some measure, copyists, and this, particularly, in cases beyond our own usage. It is the custom, in the English and French naval services, to place an Admiral at the head of a foreign squadron. The nature of military subordination is too well understood there, for an attempt to make up for a deficiency of absolute rank by transient authority, and a misapplied term. In strict military propriety, and according to established naval usage, Admirals should be employed wherever the command transcends the limited power of a Captain, that is, where several ships are acting in concert under one leader. This, however, by no means precludes the employment of Commodores, on proper occasions, in the command of smaller squadrons, or detached portions of large ones. This is the usage of foreign marines, where the title of Commodore is as distinctly recognised as with us. Neither would the Department be limited to the list of Admirals, in the selection of Commanders of squadrons. There is little likelihood, that the Admirals themselves would assert any such exclusive claim. The power, which originates the grade, leaves it under legitimate control.

There is an idea, that the title of Admiral is aristocratic, and therefore not suited to our republican institutions. We confess, that we see no other ground for this prejudice, than that the title is not in use amongst ourselves. It is simply significant of a certain naval rank and command, corresponding to General in the army, and, like the latter title, is totally destitute of social or political value. A mere prejudice will not surely be suffered to interrupt the progress of improvement.

In relation to the subject of Admirals, it is not to be forgotten that it is highly important to the interests they protect, that our naval representatives abroad should be equal in dignity to those of other countries. Our stand amongst other nations will depend, in many instances, upon this important provision. We send our *chargés* to one government, and our ministers to another, according to their position in the national scale. Our naval commanders are our representatives to the whole world. Their rank should be such as to secure to the flag they bear to every quarter of the globe, its just share of consideration and respect. Something is also due to the feelings of the officers themselves. Not only their pride of place, but their pride of country, is often wounded by unfavorable comparisons, by seeing the respect and honors accorded to other flags denied to their own, as well as by an aching, mortifying sense of the injustice which withholds from them a rank comporting with their station and command. The petty Admirals of the South American States, who dare hardly venture upon their summer seas in their crazy hulks, may take precedence of our highest officers.

We have referred to the prospect of a war with Great Britain, as a danger which it is impossible for prudence to overlook. To the grave questions of the settlement of the Northeastern boundary, and the occupation of the Northwestern Territory, are added new perplexities by the repeated search and seizure of our merchant vessels, on the coast of Africa and elsewhere. The insulting report of the chairman of our late Committee of Foreign Affairs, (nations sooner forget injuries, than insults,) and the dishonorable mismanagement of the Bank of the United States, have deeply embittered the public mind in England, and would go far to create a unanimity of feeling in a war with this country. It is notorious that the latter transaction has excited an universal, as it is a just, indignation, through sympathy with the numerous sufferers, who, not perfectly understanding the separation of the bank from the government, or relying with an undue confidence upon the judgment and integrity of its directors, have been reduced to poverty by its failure. But in reciting these grounds and evidences of ill-feeling in England towards the United States, let us not be misunderstood. We desire peace earnestly, heartily. We believe it to be the highest interest of this country, of England, of the civilized world, —

of humanity. Nevertheless, the thought of a war, if it is not to be honorably escaped, causes us no extreme anxiety. Acquainted with the resources of the United States, confident of the spirit of the people, faithfully trusting in the destiny of this wide spreading nation, the sound of war we regard not as the note of alarm, but as the call to preparation. Only, if it must come, let it find us ready at our quarters. Let us have no cause hereafter to mourn over a useless waste of blood and treasure ; to lament the extravagant expenditure which will follow upon hasty and irregular construction and equipment, and, what would be still worse, the unprofitable loss of lives thrown away in unequal combat. Remembering how much of this preparation is to consist of an efficient navy, we shall do well to take to our minds the wise suggestion of Burke, that, " of all the public services, that of the navy is one in which tampering may be of the greatest danger, which can be worst supplied upon an emergency, and of which any failure draws after it the longest and heaviest train of consequences." The ocean is the proper field for deciding any controversy in which we may be engaged, and on that field our power should be concentrated to the utmost. Thither every auspicious indication points, and there the whole heart and soul of the country will go with her defenders. This is especially true, if England is to be our enemy. England has built her citadels on the deep, and it is there we must strike to wound her mortally. There " we are touching the very apple of her eye, reaching the highest feather in her cap, clutching at the very brightest jewel in her crown." It is a glory reserved for some administration, we hope the present, by a reorganization of the naval corps, by the creation of Admirals, by a large and sustained increase of the number of active cruisers abroad, and by the equipment of an efficient squadron at home, to give a new life and impulse to the service, and effectually to secure the country from the foot of the invader. It is a distinction yet to be enjoyed by some head of the navy department, to originate a new and most important era in the existence of the navy, and identify his name with its future usefulness and honor.

We trust this distinction may fall to the lot of Mr. Badger. It is now we look, and have a right to look, for a grand and comprehensive effort. We call upon the party in power to carry out the highly favorable views they have always declared

upon this subject. We remind Mr. Badger of the deep responsibility resting upon him, and of the high expectations formed of his administration. We would entreat the President of the United States to hasten the time when, in the language of his address, "the Navy, not inappropriately termed the right hand of the public defence, which has spread a light of glory over the American flag, in all the waters of the earth, shall be rendered replete with efficiency."

ART. IV. — *Œuvres de GEORGE SAND.* Bruxelles : Meline, Cans, et Compagnie. 1839. Trois Volumes. Grand in-8.

THE powers of external nature become an object of study and reflection to the man of science, not only in their quiet and ordinary operation, by which the chain of being is preserved and the machinery of the universe does its work, but also in those occasional starts and aberrations, which at irregular intervals appall the observer and seem to menace the destruction of the whole fabric. The invisible and mysterious fluid, which many consider to be the hidden cause of the secret affinities and repulsions by which the primary particles of dissimilar substances act on each other, and hence as one of the most beneficial and efficient instruments in nature's laboratory, at times collects itself in fearful force, to rain in fire from the clouds, cleaving the firm-set oak, prostrating the rock-founded labors of the architect, and stopping by a single touch the issues of life in man himself. The springs of motion around and above us, which keep the mass of the atmosphere from stagnating and generating disease, sometimes also send forth the tornado, as it were to sweep a track of ocean and land with the besom of destruction. Volcanoes and earthquakes, sudden famine and epidemic disease, are alike objects of research to the curious student of nature with those peaceful phenomena, recurring at fixed periods, which make the earth the garden and palace of man. Often, indeed, the violent and unlooked-for outbreak supplies more pregnant hints than the ordinary workings of physical agents for the explanation of Nature's laws. The exception